1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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444 gold mines; or they work as paddlers on the rivers, which are practically the only means of communication.

The Sumu, on the other hand, are more timid and less enterprising. They are unwilling to leave their wives and children for a length of time in order to work for the benefit of the white men. Besides, [511] even to this day, their wants are few, and they can easily do without practically any article of foreign manufacture. Formerly, however, many of them were active as rubber bleeders, but owing to East Indian competition, the export of that commodity from the Mosquito Coast has stopped altogether.

TRADE AND BARTER

438 INTERCHANGE OF COMMODITIES.—Among such rude hunting and fishing tribes as the Miskito and Sumu only a very restricted trade can have existed in former days. The rivers, lagoons, and the sea were practically the only means of communication, and this is still the case. The interchange of commodities was generally effected by [436] barter. The Miskito appear to have also employed beads of sea shells as money, while the Sumu of the interior used cacao beans for the same purpose.[20] We are told by M. W. (304) that these two tribes, which were continually in a state of hostility, observed a truce on appointed days; they then met on an island in the lower Rio Coco for the purpose of trading.

556 These Indians live under an almost perfect equality, and there are no rich or poor among them. They do not strive to accumulate wealth, and the great unwearied exertion, found among our civilized societies, is unknown among them.

317 FORMER ARTICLES OF BARTER.—The Miskito used to evaporate salt from the water of the sea and lagoons and collect pretty sea 438 shells suitable for beads. These commodities were exchanged with the Sumu for pottery, cotton goods, hammocks, bark cloth, and rough canoes.

484 During the latter part of the seventeenth century, and for many years following, the Miskito undertook daring sea voyages as far south as Chiriqui Lagoon in Panama, and occasionally even beyond that region. These expeditions were, however, not organized with peaceful trading in view, but for the purpose of stealing cacao from [721] the Spanish settlers at Rio Matina (Costa Rica), and capturing Indians to be sold to the English traders of Jamaica.

439 PRESENT-DAY COMMODITIES.—Nowadays the Indian's wants from the outside world are many. The Miskito, who are less primitive than their neighbors, were already in commercial relations with

[20] According to G. N. Collins (see Safford in Smithsonian Report for 1916, p. 421) this use still persists in the Mexican State of Chiapas.

3: Pijoan D-5 (ca. 1945) 1946
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cattle and other goods for objects of cheap manufacture. Yet these objects may be of real intrinsic value to the Indians and under such circumstances it is difficult to judge with fairness. However, in the larger settlements Indians have learned the true cost of materials and considerable agitation occurs in trading. Payment for services performed in isolated communities can be accomplished by the use of such commodities as salt and tobacco. In fact, many will prefer these to actual money: in the more remote areas money per se is meaningless and payment is performed with gifts.

These days there is an ever increasing want of objects from the outside world. The items most desired are salt, machetes, axes, knives, adzes, hoes, iron cooking pots, stoves, fish hooks, files, shotguns, ammunition, cotton goods, ribbons, blue dungarees, looking glasses, combs and tobacco. Cereal grains and flour are also desired.

The enterprise of the Indian today is centered mainly around the creation of useful objects. Such objects, therefore, are often used for exchange purposes. Stone work is limited to the manufacture of crude metates or maize grinders (walpa-akbaya) which are used for grinding maize. In the northern part of the Miskito coast a coarse brownish cloth is pounded from the inner bark of a tree closely resembling the rubber trees *(Castilla* sp.). The cloth as well as the tree is referred to as *tunu* or *tikam*. The bark cloth is made into sheets or blankets for bed use or into loin cloths *(palpura)*. This cloth is of high value. Pottery once a valuable commodity to these Indians is not alonger made.

Today the main enterprise for the Miskito Indians for barter, exchange or payment are as follows: rubber collecting, banana agriculture, boat making, mine working, cattle and pig raising, general work on rivers, fur from wild animals, and general labor. However, it is to be noted that the Indian could and does in most instances subsist on his immediate environment.

VEGETABLE FOODS

Agriculture is not highly developed on the Mosquito coast, because the many plant-destroying insects limit the process of cultivable products, and the bush springs up early after the ground has been cleared. Thus after two or three crops have been obtained from a plantation *(kanana)*, a variety of weedy looking shrubs and grass, which make cultivation difficult, gets a hold on the land. The Indian then does not consider it worthwhile to undertake the labor needed to keep the ground clear but prefers to set up a new plantation *(insla)* by cutting down a patch of useble forest.